

INDEPENDENT LEDGER,

A N D

AMERICAN ADVERTISER.

Draper & Folsom's.]

MONDAY, JUNE 15, 1778.

To the PUBLIC.

THE desire many Gentlemen have expressed for this News-Paper, there being two on Thursday, has encouraged the Publishers to undertake it.

We engage that the LEDGER shall be printed in a neat manner on a fair Type, and on as good Paper as any other work of the same kind is now done; and better, if it can be procured.

We mean not to raise and deceive the expectations of the Public, by pompous pretensions; but we dare to promise that we will spare no pains or cost to procure the freshest advices from Europe and all parts of America, which we will deliver to the Public in a faithful manner and a clear arrangement; doing every thing in our power to render this Paper both useful and entertaining.

In executing this design, we are kindly encouraged to expect the occasional assistance of some Gentlemen of judgement and taste, and flatter ourselves we shall be able to render this paper as acceptable to the Public, as any other of the kind.

We are young beginners, and hope for the candor and countenance of the Community, more especially as new attempts of this sort are often of public advantage, by exciting an Emulation in the Publishers.

The price of the LEDGER will not exceed that of any other News-Paper in this Town.—Viz. Forty-two Shillings, L. M. per year, one half to be paid at the time of subscribing, and the other half at the expiration of the first six months.—This being an invariable custom, we are persuaded that the subscribers will readily comply with it, for the better enabling the Publishers to go on with such a work.

This Paper will be continued regularly every Monday, and immediately sent to the Customers residing in town at their respective dwellings, and forwarded to those in the country by the first conveyance.

Advertisements being of use to the trading and busy part of the community, due care shall be taken to have them inserted in a conspicuous and correct manner at reasonable prices.

DRAPER and FOLSOM.

As the Inhabitants of these United States are now nobly contending for their country and it's rights, we doubt not the following observations will be pleasing to our readers. They are supposed to be written by one of the most celebrated pens in Europe; tho' applicable as they are to our present glorious struggle, they never have yet been printed in America. They show by a few masterly strokes the proper idea of one's native country; the absurdity of supposing that men hold the unalienable rights of human nature by human concessions; by charter and placart, and the weakness of paper arguments against the point of the sword. America is now fully possessed of this idea, and acts upon it with a magnanimity that astonishes all the world.

OF NATIVE COUNTRY.

WE shall content ourselves, in this article, with our usual custom of proposing some questions. Has a Jew, then, any country? If he is born at Coimbra, he is born among a set of ignorant wretches, who will pester him with absurd arguments, to which he would answer in terms as absurd, if he durst answer at all. He is watched by the inquisitors who will burn him for refusing to eat bacon, and by that means become masters of his property. Is Coimbra then his country? Can he be so passionately fond of Coimbra? Can he say, as in the Horatii of Corneille, *Mon cher pays, et mon premier amour— Mourir pour la patrie est un si digne sort, Qu'on briguera en foule un si belle mort.*

The Geber, more ancient, and more respectable than the Jew, the slave of the Turk, or the Persian, or the Mogul, can he call a few piles of stones, which he has erected secretly on the mountains, his country?

The Banian, the Armenian, who pass their lives in wandering over the East in the capacity of brokers, have these any country peculiarly dear to them? Their purse and their pocket-book is all the country they have.

In the European nations, all those murderers by

trade, who let out their services, and sell their blood to the first prince that will pay them, have they any country? Not so much, surely, as the bird of prey, that returns at night to the hole in the rock where his mother built her nest.

Shall the Monks presume to say that they have any country? Their country, they tell you, is in heaven. And I am contented. I never knew any they had on earth.

With what propriety could a Greek make use of this term *country*, who is ignorant that there ever were such persons as Miltiades and Agesilaus, and who knows only that he is the slave of a janissary, who is the slave of an aga, who is the slave of a bashaw, who is the slave of a visir, who is the slave of a being whom he calls the Grand Turk.

What is it then that a man can properly call his country? Is it not a good estate with a good house upon it, of which the possessor can say, These fields that I cultivate, and this house which I have built, are my own? I live under the protection of laws which no tyrant can infringe. When those, who like me are possessed of lands and houses, assemble for their common interest, I am a part of the whole, a part of the community, a part of the sovereignty. This is my country. All else loses the idea of an habitation of men, and may more properly be termed a stable of horses, that, at the pleasure of the keeper, undergo the discipline of the whip.

OF VENICE.

No one can reproach the Venetians with having acquired their liberty by revolt. No one could say, I have enfranchised you; here is the charter of your manumission.

They did not usurp the territory as the Cæsars usurped the empire; as so many bishops, to begin with him of Rome, have usurped the regal sceptre. They are lords of Venice, (if one may use such a presumptuous comparison) as the Supreme Being is lord of the earth, because they founded it.

Attila, who never took the title of the Scourge of God, carried his ravages over Italy. He had, undoubtedly, as much right as Charlemagne, Arnold the Bastard, Guy duke of Spoleto, Berenger marquis of Frioul, and the bishops who aspired at sovereignty afterwards.

In those days of military and ecclesiastical predation, Attila came on like a vulture; and the Venetians, like halcyons, saved themselves in the waves. They had no protector but themselves; they built their nest in the middle of the waters; they enlarged, they peopled, they defended, they enriched it.

I would ask if it be possible that there should be a juster title to possession? Our ancestor, Adam, whom we suppose to have inhabited the beautiful country of Mesopotamia, was not more properly lord and master of his terrestrial paradise.

I have read *Squittinio della liberta di Venexia*, and am highly offended with him.

What! then, was not Venice originally free, because the foolish, barbarous, fanatic emperors of Greece said, this new city was built on our ancient territory; and because the Germans, having the title of emperors of the West, said, this being a western city must belong to us?

I here think I see a poor flying fish, pursued at the same time by a falcon above and a shark below, and escaping from both.

Sannazarius on comparing Rome to Venice has very well expressed himself, *Illam homines dicat, hanc possuisse deos.* Rome, at the end of five hundred years, lost by Cæsar the liberty she had acquired by Brutus. Venice has preserved hers eleven centuries, and I flatter myself that she will preserve it still.

Poor Genoa! wherefore shouldst thou be vain of exhibiting a charter of privileges given thee by one Berenger in the year 958? Concessions of privileges are but titles of servitude; and, beside, what was the charter of an itinerant tyrant, who was never properly acknowledged in Italy, and who was driven out of it two years after the date of that charter?

The true charter of liberty is independency supported by force. It is with the point of the sword the diplomat that ratify this natural privilege must be signed.

Happy Switzerland! To what placart owest thou thy Liberty? To thy courage, thy firmness, thy

mountains. — But hold — I am your emperor. — “I do not choose that you should be any longer so.” — But your fathers were my father's slaves. — “It is for that reason their children will not be yours.” — But I have a right by dignity. — “And we have a right by nature.”

When did the seven United Provinces become possessed of this incontestable right? From the moment they united; and from that moment Philip II. became the rebel. What a glorious man was that William Prince of Orange! He found a region of slaves, and he made them free men!

*Pourquoi la liberté est-elle si rare?
Parce qu'elle est le premier des biens.*

Why is liberty so sure in the world?
Because it is the first of blessings.

L O N D O N, February 9.

The awful situation of this kingdom at this very hour, is known perhaps to no man living; the designs of the Ministry, it may be presumed are known to very few; and if we may judge of the future from the past, they are such as can do us no credit as a nation, and therefore we cannot wish them success. However, the accounts laid before Parliament will now be strictly scrutinized; and through the indefatigable attention of the patriotic nobles and gentleman in Parliament, we may flatter ourselves that many things which are amiss may be rectified; and those which are wanting to put us in a posture of defence at home will be supplied; for it is a certain fact, that the French have at least 60,000 of the best troops in Europe upon their sea coasts, and all of them within a day's sail of this metropolis.

By all the letters which have been received for these last four months from Lord Howe, there is reason to expect he wishes to be recalled; and that this wish arises from the conviction he feels of never being able to reduce the colonies to obedience.

It is ridiculous in the Scotch to complain of national reflections; when it is apparent their whole conduct is the result of national conspiracy against the liberties of England.

Feb. 26. His Majesty has seen Lord Cornwallis but once since his return from America, and was then very cool to him. It is said and credited, that his Lordship has expressed General Howe's wishes to come home if Lord George Germaine is to continue Secretary of State for America. It is singular that Lord George can neither give nor execute orders properly.

A correspondent says that we have at this time no less than eleven regiments, which have not each above one hundred men. Instead therefore of raising new levies to make jobs for particular people, and provide for beggarly Scotch cousins, at the public expence the old Regiments ought to have been compleated. It is said by persons who are in a situation of being well informed, that a letter has been lately sent to the Howes, expressing a certain persons astonishment that they had not done MORE towards the conquest of America. And it is also said, by persons of equal authority, that Gen. Howe's letters have been most shamefully garbled before they were published in the Gazette, particular his letter relating the action at German-Town; and that these two circumstances are the true causes of M. D'Oyley's resigning.

The best preparative for a revolution in favour of Stewarts, whether of Charles at Rome, the family of Savoy, or the family of B--ute, is the reviving and enforcing the old doctrines of the divine right of kings, of passive obedience, and resistance; the sacred power of the priesthood, the wide extent of the prerogative, and the supremacy of Parliaments! The House of Brunswick must be absurd indeed to imagine she can support herself on the throne of Great-Britain by the same principles which expelled the Stewarts, and elevated their own family from a small electorate to a mighty monarchy.

The Rocks falling so rapidly alarms all ranks of people very much. There having been but little business done in the weeks of late, gives a most serious appearance to this great and sudden fall, which is expected to continue; as most people are now convinced, that the American war is a bad measure, and that a war with France is unavoidable.